

STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

State/Territory: Montana

ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Programs to Measure and Reduce Inconsistency

The State has in effect the following programs to measure and reduce inconsistency in the application of survey results among surveyors.

The Bureau of Licensing and Certification of the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences has developed a quality assurance program to measure and reduce inconsistency among surveyors. The program includes the following activities:

- 1) Content Review. Quality Assurance staff review all survey forms to ensure that deficiencies are regulatory-based, clearly written, adequately substantiated, and follow documentation guidelines. The staff assembles the survey package for certification and monitors survey documentation through follow-up surveys.
- 2) Quality Assurance Meetings. The bureau has monthly meetings to discuss work processing problems and solutions, surveyor performance, identify needed staff training, work assignments, and status reports. These meetings provide an opportunity for problem identification and resolution.
- 3) On-site Monitoring. Quality assurance staff conduct on-site monitoring of surveyors.
- 4) Informal Conflict Resolution. The State has adopted an informal conflict resolution process for providers. Providers who dispute deficiencies submit corroborating documentation and quality assurance staff conduct an independent review. Facilities also receive evaluation forms to evaluate surveyors and the survey process. These evaluations are reviewed by the quality assurance staff and the survey team and have been particularly useful as facility feedback to new regulations and survey processes.

Revision: HCFA-PM-92-3 (HSQB)
APRIL 1992

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5) Survey Analysis. Quality assurance staff conduct survey analysis to determine areas which are cited most and least often and identify and evaluate deficiency patterns that are outside the regional norm. Staff have also participated in shadow surveys with other states to promote better survey consistency within the region.

6) Staff training. Surveyor training is a critical aspect of quality assurance. One full-time staff member coordinates surveyor training and provides the majority of training for new surveyors and ongoing training to existing staff. The staff has developed a comprehensive and skills-specific surveyor orientation program and a preceptor program to assist in orienting new surveyors.

TN No. 93-13

Supersedes

TV No. New

Approval Date 06/14/94

Effective Date 1/1/93